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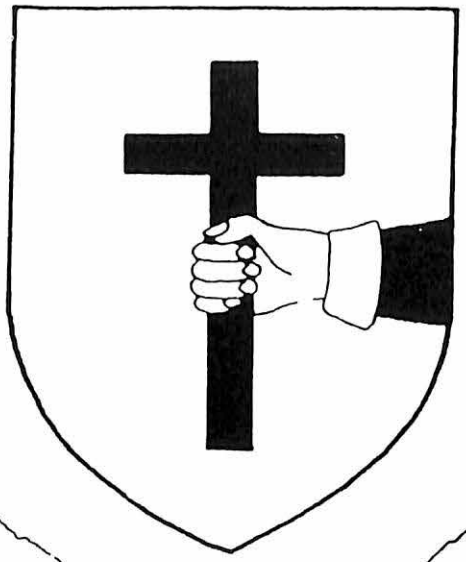
Ó Domhnaill Abú



O Donnell Clan Newsletter No. 12

Winter 1989

After Mass at the Rock of Doon all joined hands and sang 'O'Donnell Abu'.

It was a delight to see all three main branches of our Clan represented at the Gathering last June. Count Hugh had just published his 5th(or was it his 6th?) book entitled 'La Fuerza de desembarco de la Gran Armada contra Inglaterre(1588)'. See photocopy of spine. Count Gabriel, I discovered, writes for some magazines, see photocopy from 'Umweltshutz', and, of course, Nuala is back on Irish television with another series of 'Suil Thart' on Saturday afternoons.

Count Hugh's eldest children for some years have spent their summer holidays in Ireland perfecting their English, and this September (1989) Count Gabriel's daughter, Elizabeth, has become a student of the Loreto Abbey, Dalkey, Co. Dublin where the Mother General happens to be Sr. O'Donnell.

It was unfortunate that the September Gathering was cancelled as it promised to be quite an event but the organising committee considered that one Gathering in a year was enough.

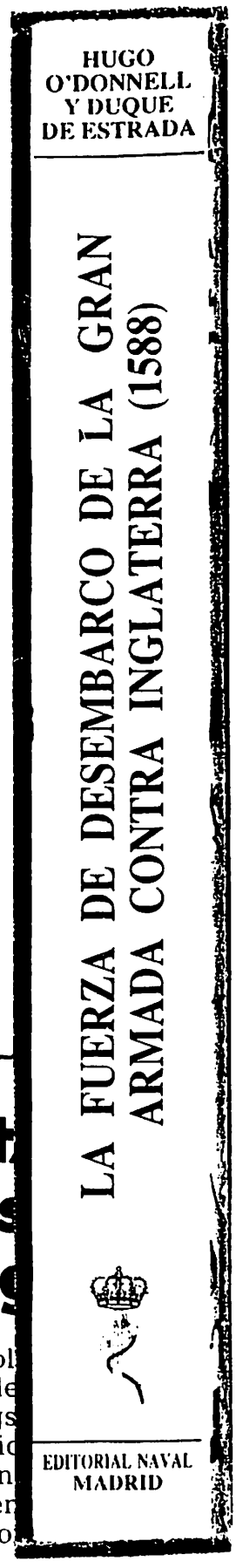
There are two video films (VHS) available of the June Gathering - one containing the lectures, the other, a record of all the events of those three glorious days. They may be had from the Secretary, Deirdre O'Donnell, Clonkillymore, Termon, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. Also available (though only a few left) is the souvenir book (80 pages) edited by me and containing most of the articles which have appeared in the first ten issues of 'O Domhnaill Abu'. It costs £4 plus postage. The clan badge (shown in ODA No. 2) along with membership to the Clann Society costs £5 plus postage; however, in order to facilitate families, exrta badges may be had for £3 each. They are also available from Deirdre.

Donegal Castle was open to the public this summer having been closed for some years. Much restoration work has been done and more is planned when money becomes available. During the summer months many visitors were shown around and given its history by the newly-appointed guide.

I hear plans are being formed for a Gathering of all organised Irish Clans on the Hill of Tara in 1992. The Hill of Tara was the seat of the Irish High Kings and a gathering place on ceremonial and festive occassions. The last Irish High King was Rory O'Connor who ruled at the time of the Norman invasion, 1169. It is very appropriate that it is a name-sake and one who claims descent from the 12th. century monarch that is now organising this Gathering. The present Rory O'Connor works for R.T.E. (Irish T.V.) and takes a great interest in his Clan's history. We wish him every success in this venture. We the O'Donnells intend to be there in strength and it is also possible that an O'Donnell Clan Gathering will take place at the same time. So stay tuned for more information.

During the Summer I had the pleasure of visits from some subscribers - Bill and Rita O'Donnell from Ohio; Dr. Nancy O'Donnell, Ontario; Ralph O'Donel, Essex (sorry I missed you), and Bill and Hazel O'Donnell from Nashville, Tennessee. I met many more at the Gathering. It is always a delight to know other members of the Clann, or those interested in our Clan's history. In future issues I intend to publish a list of members' names and addresses. If anyone has any objections please let me know within six weeks of receiving this issue.

V.O'Donnell.



Naturschut ohne ökologis Zielsetzung

Das Dilemma trifft auch die Ökol bisher keinen umfassende naturschützenden Anwendungs entwickeln konnte, aber auch nic Lage war, einen übergeordn Naturschutz in ihre bestehen Arbeitskreise wirksam einzuo

Gabriel O'Donell

der Natur genausowenig, wie der Hochbau-Technik eine Statik helfen würde, die ohne konkreten Bezug auf Material

schützenden Strukturen unserer Kulturlandschaft. Sie werden heute von unserer technisierten und chemisierten Bo-

Day 1.

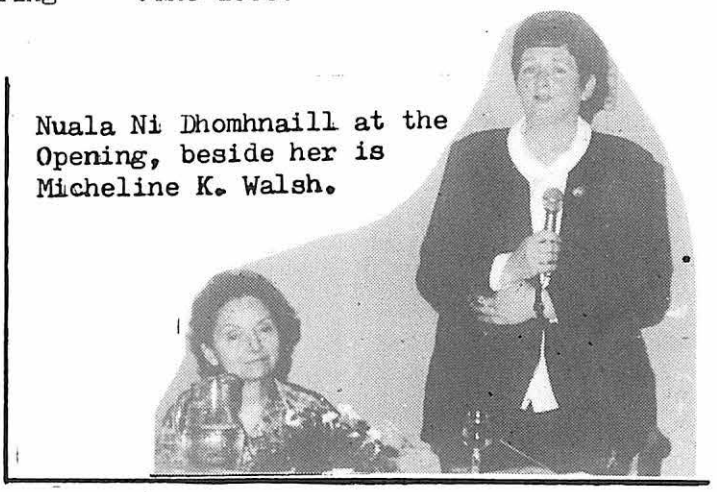
The 17th of June, a glorious sunny day, saw the last touches being put to the preparations for the O'Donnell Clan Gathering; Alex O'Donnell on his way to Dublin to collect Count Hugh O'Donnell from Spain; me on my way to Belfast to collect Count Gabriel of Austria; and O'Donnells from all over Ireland making their way to Ballybofey. I was at Belfast Airport an hour ahead of time only to find Count Gabriel there an hour ahead of time also. Count Hugh was not so fortunate, his plane being three hours delayed.

By nine o'clock a large crowd was gathered in Jackson's Hotel waiting for proceedings to begin but it was almost ten before our full complement of special guests were present and the Gathering officially got under way.

Master of Cermonies for the night was Ben O'Donnell who introduced the guests, giving a brief outline of O'Donnell history and explained how our three special guests, Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill(64a), Count Hugh(74) and Count Gabriel(75) had descended from the Chieftains of Tyrconnell. I did the same in Gaelic. Each of them in turn addressed the assembly. Mr.Eddie O'Donnell, chairman of the Donegal County Council and chairman of the organising committee of this Gathering, welcomed all present, wished the Gathering every success and stated that this was only a beginning - there would be others.

Other speakers were Mr. Dan O'Neill, N.W. Tourist Organisation (yes! there was an O'Neill present), indeed he made reference to the turbulant relations that existed between these two great Northern Clans down the centuries - sometimes allies, sometimes foe. But tonight he was delighted to be present at this official opening, wished it every success and looked forward to more as in his opinion such Gatherings were important to the tourist industry. He also promised to help financially as indeed he had with this one.

Present also were the Spanish and Austrian Ambassadors representing their respective countries. Both expressed their gratitude at being invited to this function, talked about the connections between their countries and Ireland with special reference to the O'Donnell connections.



Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill at the Opening, beside her is Micheline K. Walsh.

This was followed by the launching of the Clann Society and registration of members. Nuala, Count Hugh and Count Gabriel were first to register and were made honorary members. Each member received a Clan badge (same as was used at the 1954 Gathering - see ODA No 2), a membership card and had the name and address recorded.

After a pause for supper (wine was served earlier) we enjoyed what was considered the high-light of the evening - a talk by that eminent historian\lecturer - Micheline K.Walsh, "Red Hugh's mission to Spain". It was delivered in her usual eloquent, spell-binding manner and well desevered both the applause from her captivated audience and the vote of thanks proposed by Lucius Emerson of the Donegal Historical Society.

Genealogical charts and a display of O'Donnell photographs were exhibited by yours truly while the souvenir booklet "Na Dalaigh" and 'ODomhnaill Abu' No.11 were on sale.

The evening ended with the entire assembly singing "O'Donnell Abu" and our National Anthem with Connor Sinclair at the piano and led by Danny Minnie O'Donnell and Christina Campbell (nee O'Donnell).It was truly a fantastic evening to begin the event. It was also unique in that it was the first time that the three remaining O'Donnell branches i.e. Larkfield, Spain and Austria, had met. Nuala had met the others but the two Counts had never met. I was delighted to have made the acquaintance of so many 'O Domhnaill Abu' subscribers. As always, there wasn't just enough time for chatting.

Day 2.

Sunday turned out to be even warmer, indeed unusually warm for Donegal. From 2 o'clock the crowds were converging on Doon Rock, the ancient inauguration site of the O'Donnell Chieftains (see ODA No.9). As always it took some time to get everyone organised but with the beautiful weather no-one seemed to mind the wait.

Finally the cermoney began with a bang! Yes, a bang of a drum; led by St. Eunan's Pipe Band the assembly marched from the cross-roads up to the Rock with John O'Donnell of St. Johnston, a veteran of the '54 Gathering carrying the O'Donnell standard.

On arrival the band played on, while priests, choir and congregation prepared for Mass. Fr. John O'Donnell, the chief celebrant, welcomed the crowd. Mass then continued with Fr. Peter McMahon P.P. concelebrating and assisted by Fr. Neil Boyle P.P., Kilmacrennan, Fr. Willie Peoples C.C., Churchill, Fr. Dan McGettigan P.P., Glencolmkill, Fr. John Fitzgerald, Buncrana and Fr. Joe O'Donnell, Letterkenny. Readings and Prayers of the Faithful were performed by O'Donnells while the offertory gifts were brought to the altar by Nuala, Count Hugh, Count Gabriel and Eddie O'Donnell.

Immediately the Mass was over, all present joined hands and, led by the choir, sang 'O'Donnell Abu' - a very moving occasion, bringing tears to many eyes.

After a short break, Frankie 'Pa' O'Donnell LL.M Solicitor, Dublin and son of the late Pa O'Donnell, lawyer and politian, gave a lecture on the O'Donnells with some references to the Rock of Doon. It was a delight for me to hear Frankie , and indeed others refer to 'O Domhnaill Abu' as a source for their talks.

After Frankie's excellent talk, all made their way to the summit where Count Hugh unveiled a plaque which explains the significence of this historic spot. In a brief address the Count went on to say that this was not his first time in Ireland, and that he and the O'Donnells of Spain were always delighted to be associated with their kin in Tyrconnell.

Gradually the crowd dispersed, most making their way to nearby restaurants where meals were provided. Afterwards all adjorned to the Lagoon and the Angler's Haven for a night's dancing and entertainment. As Monday dawned, we made our way home and to bed.

Count Hugh and Eddie O'Donnell on the Rock of Doon.

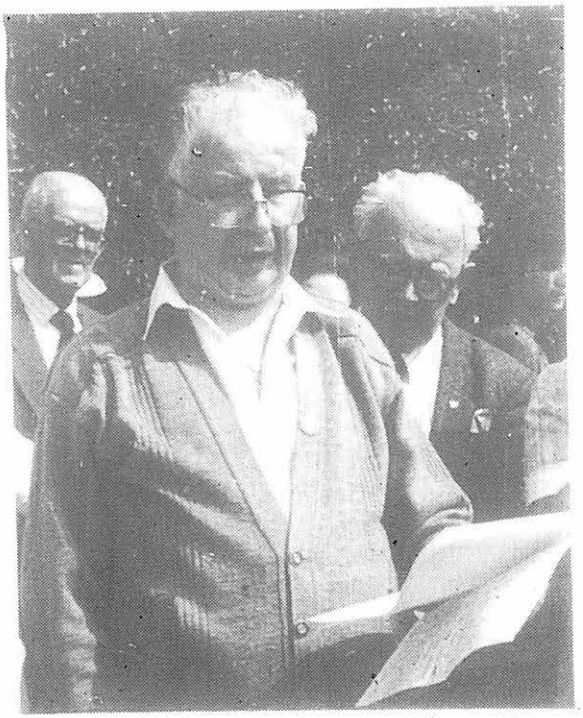
Day 3.

Monday proved to be another beautiful day with temperatures soaring. Those of us who hadn't to work assembled at Letterkenny for a bus tour to historic places (of O'Donnell interest of course). Our first stop was at Conwal Graveyard where Godfrey, one of the greatest O'Donnell Chieftains, is buried. Our guide here was Patsy O'Donnell who , for many years, has looked after this historic site. Also buried here are many O'Donnells who died at the two battles in the vicinity, i.e. Fearsaid Mor and Scairbh Sholais.

Then we travelled to the newly-built Gartan Heritage Centre where we were given a talk on the O'Donnells by Fr. John Silke. (He wrote the article on Cardinal O'Donnell. in ODA No.9). This illustrated talk was very informative and dealt alot with the Clan history before Kinsale.

Our next stop was an unscheduled one. Manus a' Phice, the famous pikeman of 1798(see ODA No.7) is buried in the little graveyard of Gartan and as this hero was an ancestor of Fr. John O'Donnell, chief celebrant of Sunday's Mass, and of Eddie O'Donnell, chairman of our organising committee and indeed the man responsible for the entire Gathering, we thought it right to visit the grave. Here Fr. John recounted brilliantly the life and exploits of his forefather.

A few miles further on we stopped in Kilmacrennan for lunch, and then down the road where Fr. John Fitzgerald, a



Patsy O'Donnell speaking at Conwal.

noted historian, gave us an account of the Abbey.

From here we journeyed to Rathmullan, and how lovely the town looked on this day with hundreds enjoying the beach and watersports - a far cry from what we were commemorating, when on the 14th of Sept. 1607 the cream of Ulster's Nobility, stealtily and secretly, boarded a ship about a mile upstream and sailed for the continent - some knowing they would never see Ireland again; others hoping to return with support to continue the struggle. But on this day we were enjoying the peace, freedom and prosperity of a new age.

Having been promised a naval vessel to assist with the wreath-laying cermoney, we were a little disappointed to see it not there. On enquiring we were told that the L.E. Orla was on her way but

Count Gabriel with Chris Campbell at Rathmullan.

was delayed due to duties on the high seas.

After enjoying the sun, sea and sand for a few hours, we retired to the function room of Keaveny's Hotel where we had the pleasure of listening to Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill deliver a wonderful lecture on "The Flight of the Earls". It added to the lecture that it was presented by one who descended from the same family as those who departed this shore almost four hundred years ago.

Then it was back out into the sunlight again. There was still no sign of L.E.Orla so a local boat was hired to take the wreath-laying party out to the middle of the Lough. On arrival there the boat came to a halt, the engines were cut and a solemn silence fell. Fr. Fitzgerald stepped forward and blessed the wreath which was then placed on the water by Count Gabriel.

It was a heart-moving moment. One couldn't but think of that other boat load we were commemorating and how heart-rending it must have been for them. They were leaving their homes, their friends and in some cases members of their own family (see ODA No.11). Of course they had hopes to return as already stated but yet they had witnessed the deterioration of the old Gaelic System for the last number of years and would have been under no illusion as to what lay in store.

There was a loud blast on the boat's siren, the engines started up again and we headed for port. Few words were spoken on the return journey but on arrival at the pier we were jolted back into the present. There was now a certain urgency to get back to Letterkenny to prepare for the final event - the banquet.

By nine o'clock the Milford Inn was filling up with O'Donnells and their friends. A magnificent meal was enjoyed by all at the end of which more speeches and presentations took place. Pieces of Donegal Parian China, suitably inscribed, were presented to our special guests - Nuala, Count Hugh and Count Gabriel and one also to the widow of our late clan historian, Rupert Coughlan. This was received by Eileen Bannon on behalf of her mother.

The night continued with more Irish music and dancing. Finally it was all over. Having sung 'O'Donnell Abu' and our national anthemn, we said our farewells and promised to be back to the next O'Donnell Gathering. And so it was home and to bed, exhausted as the sun sent its first rays over Dark Inisowen.

Patent of Rory O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnell.

When Earl Rory had made his peace with King James (see ODA No.11) a patent was drawn up specifying the terms of that agreement. Three copies in all were made, one for the King ,one for his Lord-lieut. in Ireland and one for Rory. Rory's is now in the possession of Count Gabriel of Austria. The parchment measures about 42" by 24" and although now housed in a specially designed case shows sign of having been folded small enough to fit into a pocket. It is also evident that it has suffered much rough handling during the centuries. Some years ago it was brought back to Ireland where the late Rupert Coughlan had it compared with the Lord-lieutenant's and found many discrepancies. The copy given to the Lord-Lieut. held more favourable terms for Rory, in other words Rory was cheated out of some of his property and rents.
Here is an English translation of part of Rory's copy, the original is in Latin.

"James, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, etc., to all whom these letters patent shall come, Greetings. Since our well-beloved cousin, Roderick, alias Rorie O'Donell, Knight, now Earl of Tirconell, in our Kingdom of Ireland, when all the country burned with the flames of rebellion, freely made his humble submission to our beloved cousin and councillor, Charles Blount, Knight, Lord Mountjoy and Earl of Devon, our Lieutenant in our Kingdom of Ireland, and since after being received into mercy he hath shown his loyalty and obedience by doing many good and acceptable services not only in our Kingdom of Ireland but also by dutifully presenting himself before our royal person in our Kingdom of England, humbly beseeching our princly favour that we would vouchsafe to grant unto him the territories and countries of Tirconnell in the province of Ulster in our Kingdom of Ireland, which his ancestors had and held by inheritance there for many centuries past and had ever, as loyal and faithful subjects distinguished themselves by rendering much acceptable service to our ancestoral Kings and Queens of England, and have ever assisted in putting down many insurrections and rebellions of the O'Neales in the said province of Ulster, also in maintaining, assisting and supporting the armies of our predecessors in the said province to suppress various insurrections and rebellions fermented in that place until Hugh Rufus O'Donell brother of the said Roderick, lately deceased in Spain by a treacherous rebellion against our fair sister, Elizabeth, lately Queen of England, stained the reputation of the unspotted name of O'Donell with much disgrace and dishonourable infamy. Therefore of our princely grace and favour we desire that the said Roderick be heretofore known by the name, title, style and honour of Roderick, Earl of Tirconnell, wherefore we create and constitute the same Roderick Earl of Tirconnell by these our Letters Patent under the Great Seal of our Kingdom of Ireland, and the aforesaid title, style and honour of Earl of Tirconnell shall be proper to the aforesaid Roderick, and to the heirs male of his body, legitimately begotten, with remainder to Cafferie O'Donell, brother of the aforesaid Roderick, and his male heirs legitimately begotten, as will hereafter be more fully set out in these same Letters Patent, accordingly since Roderick and his heirs aforesaid shall preceive themselves to be advanced and honoured by our favour above all their ancestors they shall gratefully remember how far they are bound by a greater and more fitting bond of loyalty and obedience and henceforth be influenced and desirous to carry out, perform and do even greater and more worthy service to us, our heirs and successors. Be it known that in view of the foregoing and in consideration of the good and faithful service of the aforesaid Roderick, Earl of Tirconnell and his said heirs we bind our heirs and successors. Furthermore for the honourable upkeep and tenure of the said title and style of Earl of

Tirconnell and for various other reasons and considerations, and also out of our special grace and favour and assured knowledge as well as by the advice and consent of our beloved and trusted Councillor, Sir George Cary, our Deputy General and Treasurer for War in this our Kingdom of Ireland and by virtue of these letters signed by our own hand and under our own seal at our Court of Tottenham, the fourth day of September in the first year of our reign over England, France and Ireland, and the thirty-seventh over Scotland. Our Chancellor of Ireland is commissioned to put to the charge of the aforesaid Deputy * and others of direct rank the enforcement of this title * . By virtue of this Patent we grant, bestow and confirm upon our aforesaid cousin, Roderick O'Donell, Knight, Earl of Tirconnell, all and singular the territories, countries and hereditaments within the ambit, extent and circuit of land called Tirconnell, within the province of Ulster, with all castles, manors, lordships, islands, messuages, granaries, tofts, edifaces, storehouses, stables, haggards, bawns, lands, tenements, meadows, commons, pastures, wastes, bogs, moors, ponds, lakes, marshes, swamps, waters, water courses, fishings, fish courses, warrens, chases, mines, quarries, advowsons, services, rents, annuities, all rents and services of free and customary, tenants, fines, fees, markets, fairs, tolls, customs, courts, jurisdictions, franchises, privileges, profits, commodities, advantages, emoluments and all other hereditaments whatsoever, with all pertaining to them of whatever nature or kind or species, by whatever name they are known, given or recognised or everywhere known, lying or existing within the aforesaid ancestral precinct or territory within Tirconnell or within any other of them and whatever any one or other of the ancestors of the aforesaid Earl had of ancient time just and legitimate possession within the limits and boundries of the aforesaid precinct of territory of Tirconnell, in the said province of Ulster. .....".

..... There is some doubt about the correct translation of this phrase.

Some of the crowd on the Rock of Doon, Sun 18th. June.

Lieutenant-General Charles H. O'Donnell

Charles O'Donnell was born on the 3rd. Sept. 1857 in Jujuy in the very north of Argentina. His father was Dr. Sabino O'Donnell, a Federal Government Minister of that province, his mother was Dona Josefa Perez. Sabino's grandfather(of the Spanish line) was sent from Spain in the middle of the eighteenth century to create the Academy of Mathematics in what was then called the Vice-royalty of the Rio de la Plata.(See ODA No.10). Charles joined the army at a very early age and saw much action in the civil and frontier wars that raged in the country at the time. The country known as Argentina today was then, taking shape but with much resistance. The Central Government of the time had much trouble quelling continuous local rebellions by the natives and it was here with the 12th Battallion, Border Infantry that young O'Donnell saw his first action.

In Dec. 1870 he entered the newly created Military Academy in Buenos Aires . A year later he was back in service with the same 12th Batt. He was, once again, much involved in the campaign to unify Argentina which often meant subduing minor resistance by local tribes who resented and resisted any infringment of their territories by, what they considered, foreign rule.

O'Donnell's greatest contribution to this campaign was the part he played in opening up the Patagonia for colonization. This was a large triangle of land stretching from Buenos Aires right down to the very south of the Continent. This territory was an uninviting land, with the second highest mountains in the world, much desert, and populated by Indian tribes who were inhospitable to the white man. The only white men there at the time was a colony of Welsh whalers living on the coast just opposite the Malvino Islands.

O'Donnell supressed all resistance offered by the native tribes, and so brought this vast area under Argentine rule, including that area held by the whalers whom he forced to obey Argentine laws and sing its National Anthem. This news reached Britain somewhat altered. It was reported in London that a colony of British whalers in South America was attacked by marauding Irishmen led by an O'Donnell.

Needless to say promotion followed success and Charles received much of the latter. Indeed he was always on the winning side. By 1886 he was made Lieut.-colonel and Chief of the 1st. Infantry Batt. Later that year he was raised to Colonel. In 1893 he was nominated director of the Military Academy and in 1896 Chief of the 2nd Batt. of the Buenos Aires Division. In 1900 he was made a member of the committee of the Council of War, an office he exercised only for a year, when more important posts came along. These included Inspector of Infantry, Director of the School for Potential Officers, and C.O. of the forces encamped in the Campo de Mayo in which capacity he rose to General of Brigade in 1904.

In May 1910 he was assigned Aide-de-Camp to the president of Chile during the centenary celebrations. In August of that year he was promoted to General and took command of the 5th Division, a post he filled with the distinction that characterised all the acts of his military career. He retired on the 30th April 1917 a 5-star General after 59 years and 19 days of military service. General Charles Henry O'Donnell died in Buenos Aires on the 22nd. Sept. 1927.

He had been married to Felisa Rosa Suarez and had 15 children, 11 of which survived. One of those was Mario father of Guillermo mentioned in ODA No 10. He had received many honours in his time including silver and gold medals. On the 17th of Sept. 1910 he was conferred with the 'Order of Merit' of Chile(a gold medal).

(The above is translated from "BIOGRAFIAS ARGENTINAS Y SUDAMERICANAS" p.190-194 with some remarks by Guillermo O'Donnell.)

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